subsequent Acts; and with a view to adopt some of those amendments and to modify the law in certain other respects, the late Mr. Thanu Pillai introduced in this Council on the 17th Vaikausy 1072, a Bill to amend the Stamp Regulation. But this Bill, after having passed through the process of revision by a Select Committee, was withdrawn with the permission of the Council on the 9th Edavom 1073, when it was promised that another Bill to consolidate and amend the Stamp Regulation will be introduced on a future date. A Bill revising the Stamp Law was at that time under consideration in His Excellency the Viceroy's Council, and it has since been passed and become law in British India as Act II of 1899. The Bill, which it is now proposed to introduce here, has been framed on the lines of the last mentioned British Indian Act, with the necessary modifications and additions required to suit local conditions and circumstances.

The existing Stamp Regulation, which has been now in operation for the last 19 years, has been found by experience to be defective in several matters, its chief defect being the want of clearness. No Act of the Legislature more largely enters into the business transactions of everyday life than the Stamp Act. It is a law which has to be understood and interpreted both by the lawyer and the layman; and its provisions ought, therefore, to be made as clear and intelligible as possible. In the proposed Bill, some of the sections of the Regulation have been so recast as to make them more easily understood, and the schedule has been re-arranged in the alphabetical order for facility of reference. It is also sought to bring within the operation of the Stamp Law certain transactions which might well be included but which are omitted in the existing Regulation, as well as to allow such additional exemptions and concessions as are clearly necessary in the public interests. The present law does not sanction any procedure for the recovery of stamp duties and penalties. This defect is sought to be remedied in the proposed Bill. Provision has also been made for the revision of the orders of the Division Peishcars in Stamp cases. Several other useful alterations and amendments have been introduced in accordance with the British Indian Act. The amendments proposed in the Bill formerly withdrawn and the suggestions of the High Court have been adopted as far as possible.

The necessity for re-enacting the Stamp Law being manifest, I trust the Council will accord permission to introduce the proposed Bill.

Permission was granted accordingly.

BILL TO AMEND REGULATION VI OF 1073.

Mr. Govinda Pillai.—I beg to move that Rule 33 be suspended by the Council, just to enable me to introduce this short Bill. It has been already circulated among the members although, for want of sufficient time, it has not been published in the Gazette. If I am permitted to introduce the Bill at this meeting, it can be published in the Gazette in due course and taken up for the discussion of the principle at the next meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Kuruvila.

President.—This measure has to be considered as somewhat urgent. The necessity for it has arisen in this manner. The High Court have, in a recent case, ruled that, as the law now stands, the Sirkar cannot recover the liabilities of public servants without the aid of the civil courts. I need hardly say that the practice of recovering such liabilities as arrears of revenue is sanctioned by long usage and it is very necessary in the interests of the Sirkar to legalise this procedure. The Bill merely seeks to do this. It is desirable to expedite the passing of this measure, and if the motion now before the Council is carried, a delay of three months will be avoided. The principle of the Bill will, of course, be deferred for consideration to the next meeting.

The Council having suspended the Rule, Mr. Govinda Pillai introduced the Bill, explaining the necessity for the measure as set forth in the Statement of Objects and Reasons and the nature of the provisions contained in the single section which the Bill seeks to introduce in Regulation VI of 1073 relating to departmental enquiries into the conduct of public servants.

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He then proposed that the Bill be published in the Gazette with the Statement of Objects and Reasons and that the discussion of the principle be postponed to the next meeting.

The motion was put and agreed to.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

Mr. Rajaram Row.—I beg to move that the Report of the Select Committee on this Bill be taken up for consideration.

Seconded by Mr. Dharmaraja Iyer.

Carried.

Section 2, clause (b), I.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to propose that the words in parenthesis "(=12 barley corns)" be omitted. These words refer to an old calculation, which is absolutely unscientific. It seems to me that the words might well be left out as the English inch is well-defined.

Seconded by Mr. Kuruvila.

Carried.

Section 2, clause (b), II.

Mr. Govinda Pillai.—I beg to propose that the words "or grain" at the end of the section be omitted. I am afraid this expression will lead to some practical difficulty as there are various kinds of grain, and it will be necessary to mention the particular grain that is meant. There are also different methods of measurement in the case of grains. The words appear to me hardly necessary, as measurement by water referred to in the original section is the simplest process.

Seconded by Mr. Dharmaraja Iyer.

After some discussion, the motion was carried by majority.

Section 3.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to propose that the term "units" be substituted for "unit standards". The expression used in section 2 is "units" and it is desirable, for the sake of uniformity, to retain the same expression throughout. The term "unit standards" does not occur in the British Act.

Seconded by Mr. Rajaram Row.

Carried.

Section 4.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to propose that the words "magnitude and denominations of" be inserted between "declare" and "the" in line 4. These words occur in the British Act and should, I think, be put in for precision of language.

Seconded by Mr. Rajaram Row.

Carried.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to propose that in line 5 of this section also, the expression "unit standards" be altered into "units".

Seconded by Mr. Rajaram Row.

Carried.

Mr. Ferguson.—I beg to propose that the word "integral" occurring in lines 9 and 10 be omitted and "a" substituted for "an" in line 9. I think the retention of this word will cause practical difficulty, as it may not be possible to express the various weights and measures obtaining in the country in terms of the sanctioned units without having recourse to fractions. The amendment is necessary to enable the units to be worked into any system that may be decided on.

Seconded by Mr. Kuruvila.

Carried.

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